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MXGP MAG:

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1215 Geneva 15 Airport
Switzerland

MXGP Mag #27 December 2015

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EDITORIAL

Giuseppe Luongo
President of Youthstream Group

Dear MXGP Friends,

For MXGP fans November and December are the quietest months and the riders have been able to take a well-deserved rest. However, behind the scenes teams and manufacturers are busy preparing their new bikes for the next season and some have even already started testing their brand new equipment with their riders.

November is also the time of the FIM Gala and Awards Ceremony which was held this year in Jerez, in the south of Spain. This prize giving ceremony is a top-notch event organized by the FIM celebrating all its World Champions, where, for next year Youthstream will invite 2 MXGP fans to assist the Awards Ceremony and Gala dinner.

Since years now, every year Youthstream invites all the MXGP organizers to a meeting to prepare for the following season where issues are discussed and novelties are presented, this year this meeting was held in Jerez so that the organizers could attend and enjoy the FIM Awards Ceremony and Gala. The main topics were the improvements which will be made to the tracks in terms of preparation and maintenance, the live TV production for the Saturdays' racing activities and the continuous improvements to the infrastructure to welcome the teams, industries, fans and guests better.

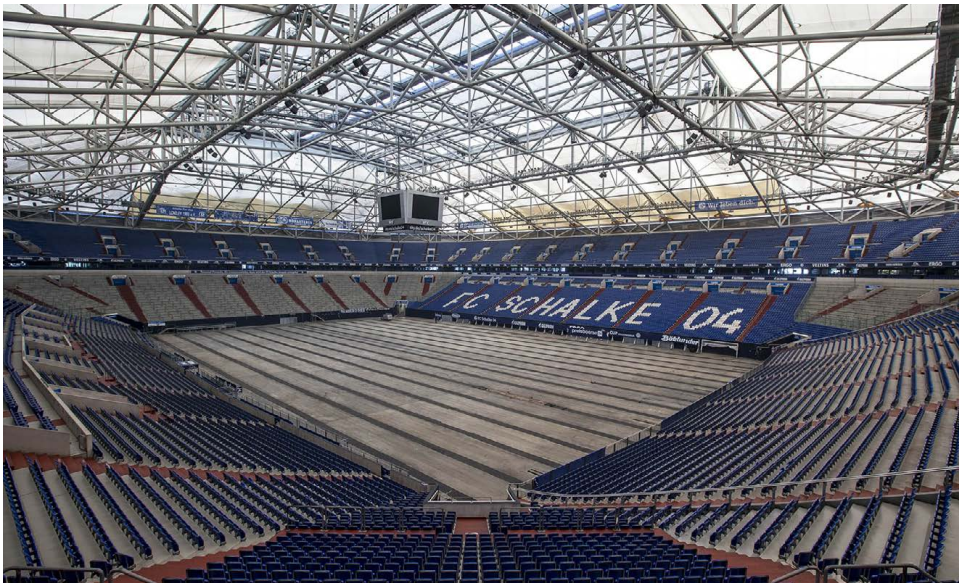
Everyone at the organizers' meeting was buzzing after the presentation of the Supermotocross which will be held on the 8th October 2016 in the Veltins Arena in Germany, all the World Championship organizers are excited about this new concept and have offered

their participation, and the manufacturers have confirmed their presence with their very best riders in the world. You can read more about the Supermotocross event in a special feature further on in this month's MXGP Mag.

It's great to hear Herlings' recovery is going well, so this will make MX2 an interesting Championship as he has been starved of racing due to his reoccurring injuries and will be craving for a title victory but it's not going to be easy for him as there are many others out there hungry for supremacy.

What's going to be exciting next year is seeing Gajser, Tixier and Guillod attack 2016 in the main class, the arrival of all this young blood will make the MXGP class challenging and extremely unpredictable. The arrival of new circuits like Suphan Buri in Thailand, Sepang in Malaysia, Frauenfeld-Gachnang in Switzerland and Charlotte Motor Speedway in USA will also help mix things up.

Whether it is Youthstream, FIM, the organizers, the teams or riders, all the various players of the FIM World Championship are working hard during these cold winter months to bring you an unforgettable 2016 season.



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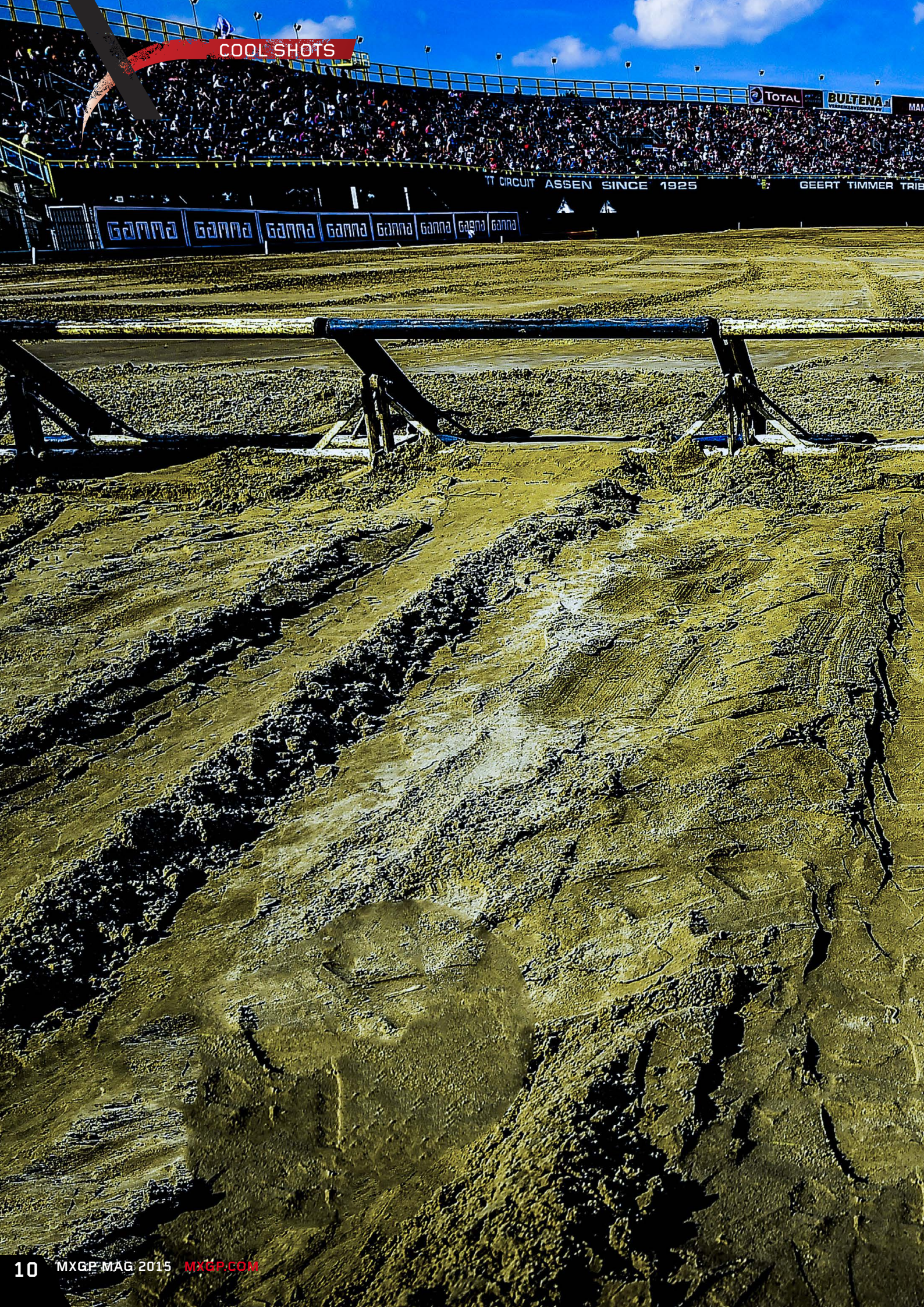
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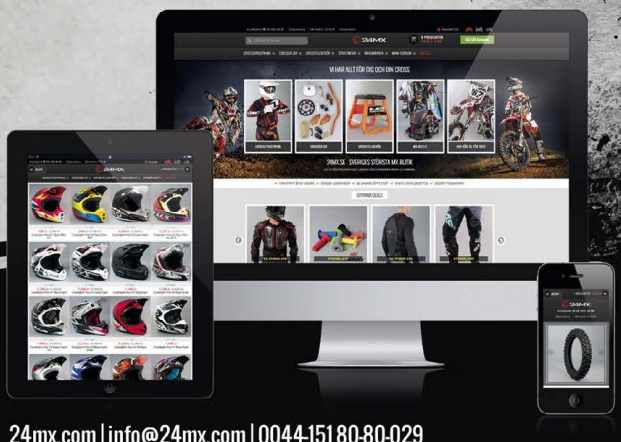

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THE BEST RACES OF 2015

When future petrolheads look back through the annals of MXGP history what will they think of when they consider the 2015 season, will it be known as one of the greats? We here at MXGP Mag think it might be, when you consider the hype coming into the year, a new American challenger, healthy riders on factory bikes, new circuits to balance the historic greats, and then consider the rollercoaster that followed for almost every top rider in both classes, well it really had all the elements that go into making a season of legend. Come with us as we pick out some of those key moments in the races that will echo through the annals of MXGP folklore.

WHO: Jeffrey Herlings – Red Bull KTM Factory Racing Team
WHAT: Winning the overall on his return from injury
WHERE: Grand Prix of Qatar, Losail

There is one specific aspect to the Grand Prix of Qatar, something unique to the venue, that gives a great insight into who is physically race ready and up for a fight, and that is the few hundred meters between the paddock buildings on the road race circuit and the MXGP track outside turn one. Perch yourself on the pit wall before a practice session and watch as the riders trudge past - Motocross boots are not the most practical things to walk in - and see who has a spring in their step and which rider is dragging their heels. In 2015 the award for least excited rider to be walking to the circuit went to Jeffrey Herlings, a man for whom every step looked like battle of mind over body as he tried to shrug off the still painfully obvious remnants of his life changing femur break from 2014.

He didn't think he was race ready, his blistered palms didn't think he was race ready, the nervous looks on the team's faces suggested that they didn't think he was race ready, but the fact of the matter was that if he had managed to race the previous year at the Grand Prix of Leon with a leg that was actually still in two pieces, then he should be able to race after another 5 months of rehab. Well that was the logic but the reality had everyone questioning just what "The Bullet" would be able to do.

It was almost as if we had forgotten that this was Jeffrey Herlings, the man who is only happy when he wins, anything less and he may as well not have bothered. A man who had lapped almost the entire field on more than one occasion in his career and who had a serious point to prove after losing the 2014 MX2 title to his then team mate Jordi Tixier, no matter the extenuating circumstances.

As the riders lined up under the flood lights on Saturday night the consensus put a top 5 as a distinct possibility and a top three for an

outside chance, sure he had won the qualifying race but that was only 20 minutes long, he could have gutted his way through that, but his two weeks of training would not be enough to hold off the guys who had spent 3 months getting into peak race fitness for this race, right?
Well, it turns out we were all wrong, dead wrong. No matter that he didn't get the hole shots, he passed the men who did, his new team mate Pauls Jonass in race one and perhaps strongest title rival Dylan Ferrandis in race two to take two wins and some encouragement that perhaps he could be the athlete he was before the accident. The Bullet was back.

WHO: Tim Gajser – Honda Gariboldi
WHAT: Winning his first MX2 Grand Prix
WHERE: Grand Prix of Trentino, Pietramurata

At the time of day when the second motos get underway at the Grand Prix of Trentino on the venerable Pietramurata circuit the sun is on the verge of doing a disappearing trick behind the imposing cliffs of the Dolomite mountains, leaving the upper parts of the track in shadow while the lower slopes bask in the afternoon sun, it can be a dazzling and ever changing combination. It was in this half dusk that the second MX2 moto of Round 4 of the 2015 championship was run, with Jeffrey Herlings looking the likely winner after his 15 second win over Tim Gajser in race 1.

In that race neither rider had the best of opening laps but it was Gajser who came from further back to take 2nd place by the flag and for race two the key for the Honda rider was to get his red machine closer to the sharp end, faster. That he did, while Herlings was mired in 8th place on lap one Gajser moved past Aleksandr Tonkov and Jordi Tixier to take the lead before the end of the lap.

8 laps later and Herlings

was into second place, with Tonkov's Husqvarna expiring and Jordi Tixier unable to contain his former team mate, the race to the flag between Herlings and Gajser was well and truly on.

From lap 9 until lap 13, the championship leader on the KTM closed the gap by more than a second per lap, eating into the lead of Gajser at a formidable rate, but such was the gap that had been created in the opening half of the race that Gajser was still in control. Once the gap got below 6 seconds the Honda rider began to up his pace, and almost match the lap times of Herlings. With both riders pushing at their maximum this was the time when historically Herlings would have been able to raise his level further and watch as his opposition gave way, made a mistake, or ran out of steam before the flag dropped, not so on this day. Gajser held his nerve and demonstrated how confident he was in his pace as he continuously pumped out lap after lap within tenths of the chasing rider's pace. With 3 laps to go Gajser was the fastest man on the track, a marker destroyed by over a second on the next tour by Herlings who closed to within 2 seconds. We were set for a barnstorming finish, the last lap board was out, the gap was negligible and two of the brightest and youngest talents in World Motocross were riding at their peak, when the unthinkable happened, Herlings crashed. The rear wheel of his KTM skidded out from underneath him as he pushed to get within passing distance and his challenge was over. Unaware of the incident Gajser hammered his way to the finish line, pushing to the very end, to win his first moto of the year and his first ever Grand Prix. It was, perhaps, a portentous moment for the 2015 campaign

WHO: Ryan Villopoto – Monster Energy Kawasaki Racing Team
WHAT: Winning his first MXGP moto
WHERE: Grand Prix of Thailand, Nakhonchaisri

The Thai MXGP took place at the brand new track of Nakhonchaisri, which was located an hour east of Bangkok.

It was a track that needed that awkward combination of a being tamed but also being respected, just ask Julian Lieber. And so it was that one man arrived fresh off a whistle-stop trip back to Belgium in just the right frame of mind to master the track, step forward Mr Ryan Villopoto.

Race one was an explosion of speed and vitality from the number 2 Monster Energy Kawasaki rider, it was almost as if all the pent up energy from his disappointing races in Qatar left his body in one single 40 minute session. From the way he barged his bike to the front in the opening encounter on the switch back first turn, to shrugging off an impact with Clement Desalle seconds later, to how he battered the track into submission, exerting his rhythm onto its technical combinations as he flattened the opposition in what was a truly eye opening first 5 laps.

The talk around the paddock before, during and after the races was that the track was always going to suit Villopoto and his USA racing background, but race two, where he finished third behind Cairoli and Desalle to take the overall, proved the others had similar speed, so perhaps it was about more than just the track.

The Ryan Villopoto of Thailand was a different man to the Qatar race of the week before, no longer walking around like a shell shocked refugee desperately trying to understand his new environment. In Thailand he got his business head back on and went back to work, doing what he has always done best, winning, and doing it in domineering style.

WHO: Max Nagl – Red Bull Ice One Husqvarna Factory Racing
WHAT: Passing his closest rivals to win race two
WHERE: Grand Prix of Patagonia Argentina, Neuquén
If there was one race that defined the speed and confidence of Red Bull IceOne Husqvarna's Max Nagl in the first half of 2015 it was race 2 in Patagonia, Argentina. He had had to give best to both Clement Desalle, the red plate holder, and Antonio Cairoli in

race one, his poor first lap put him down in 8th place and he ran out of laps before he could snatch third from Cairoli, race two was much more Max. Once more he didn't get that absolute killer start and he left himself with work to do. With both Cairoli and Desalle ahead of him he needed to pass them both if he wanted to take the win and with it the overall and that was exactly what he did. Closing in on Cairoli down the start finish straight at the start of lap two and carrying that momentum right around the first two turns so that by the time he was over the huge floating jump that characterized the Neuquén track, he was able to sling his white machine the long way around Cairoli before switching back and chopping the nose off the 8-times World Champion.

Nagl then set about closing the 2 second gap to race leader Desalle by banging in a monster of a second lap that halved the distance, from there it was a game of cat and mouse as Nagl stalked his prey, closing a few tenths here, losing a few there, sneaking ever closer to the back of the Suzuki. On lap 6 he pounced, sensing the fear in Desalle he upped his attack, forcing the Suzuki rider to defend his lines and compromise his rhythm in the hopes of holding off Nagl's attack. A loose rear end out of a right hander slowed Desalle's pace into the next left and it was on the exit of that corner that Nagl made his move, slipping alongside under the Ipone bridge he glanced across at Desalle and knew he had the pace, and the line, to reach the next right hand apex first. And so it was that he threw the Husqvarna into the turn ahead of Desalle and scampered away to win the moto, to bury the demons of his Thai struggles and to claim back the momentum in the early championship standings, right then and there, Max Nagl was the strongest rider in MXGP, he was the one to watch.

WHO: Shaun Simpson – Hitachi Construction Machinery Revo KTM
WHAT: Crashing in race two and still winning
WHERE: Grand Prix of Belgium, Lommel

As MXGP races draw to a close with the lead riders entering the final few laps, sometimes there is no real racing to follow, especially at tracks like Lommel where riders are merely surviving, and so everyone's attention and that of the TV cameras turns to the race leader and his approaching triumph.

The two lap board is the important milestone in these situations, rarely does anything happen after that black square is shown to the leader, but sometimes getting to that point is just a little bit harder than it should be.

Lommel this year was a beast of a track, a perfect summer of heat and rain meant it was at its deep bombhole best with pitfalls a plenty to catch out even the most seasoned of sand rider. This year that man was Shaun Simpson, the only survivor of the 2014 podium at the same event and the man everyone was talking about for race wins. He duly produced the goods in race one, leading home Gautier Paulin and Romain Febvre, the two championship contenders, and declaring himself fit and raring to go again in the post race television interview.

The second race wasn't quite so easy for Simpson but it was great for the fans as he caught and pressured Febvre who made a couple of uncharacteristic mistakes, proof of how tough the conditions were that day, before stalking and pouncing on early race leader Gautier Paulin to move to the head of the pack on lap 7. It was a momentous pass for Simpson, at the previous sand race way back in April in Valkenswaard he had finished 41 and 28 seconds behind Paulin in the two motos, and here he was passing him and pulling away like he was on a different race track, it was concrete proof that the slow burn Scotsman was finally in control of his MXGP destiny, until the 2 lap board was in sight that is.

Lommel for the past two years has incorporated a hugely spectacular and daunting quad jump that runs right in front of the main fan and VIP area, no pressure then for the riders that choose to attempt a jump that if done

right was worth a second a lap. Last year only Paulin and Simpson were doing it, Jeremy Van Horebeek had a go and received a nasty gash to his forehead as a reward. Once again in 2015 it was the Frenchman and the Scot who took on the big jump and of those two it was only Simpson who went for it every lap, jumping high and long and landing inch perfect on the downside of a small wave, we'll let Simpson explain what happened.

"It was a bit of a stupid one actually, I was still doing the quad quite easily but I changed my line by about 12 inches and that's all it took to land in some soft sand and it sort of pitched me one way and then the other and I just went down. I don't think I've ever got up as quickly as I did there, probably about 3 or 4 seconds and I was back on it so, not only did I want to win the overall today I wanted to try and go 1-1, I've never done that before, I came close at Valkenswaard in 2009 and I came close in Lierop but just not quite strong enough, but today I was and I was definitely the strongest, maybe not the fastest all the time but I was definitely the strongest."

WHO: Romain Febvre – Yamaha Factory Racing Yamalube
WHAT: Passing Cairoli and leading his first MXGP race
WHERE: Grand Prix of Spain, Talavera de la Reina

Towards the latter half of the year, as the scale of the injuries to the early season championship contenders hit home, with Nagl and Desalle both out before round 10 and Cairoli hanging up his boots in Latvia, Romain Febvre became the man to watch, and also the man who took some strong criticism for winning only because of the injuries to others.

Let's try and put that all in a bit of post season perspective shall we? Febvre's first moto top three came in round two with a third in race one in Thailand, beating Nagl and Cairoli straight up. He repeated that performance in race two at round 4 in Pietramurata by passing Clement Desalle at the halfway mark and lapping faster than anyone on the track except race winner Nagl to close to within 6 tenths of Cairoli at the flag.

Then over the next 3 rounds he scored his maiden podium in Spain, his first moto win in the UK and his first overall Grand Prix win at the French round in Villars Sous Ecot. Each time he caught and passed either Desalle, Nagl or Cairoli to do so, no other rider in the top 5 of the 2015 standings was able to do that and it was only at that French GP at round 8 that the first big injury to his competitors happened. When Max Nagl crashed out of the qualifying race in Germany 2 rounds later he was just 38 points ahead of Febvre having lost significant points over the previous two rounds, so with hindsight it is clear that Febvre's title challenge was well and truly on before anyone really realized the significance of his pace.

We here at MXGP Mag were right there for all of the significant moments of the 2015 season and though some might say his first moto win was the breakthrough race of the year, we believe that it was race two in Spain that was the defining moment in Febvre's self belief and the race that set him firmly on his path to race and championship wins, for there, under the scorching sun in Talavera de la Reina, Febvre found his flow.

A mediocre start was made up for by a blistering first few laps from the French rider to pass first Evgeny Bobryshev and Max Nagl and close up to the rear wheel of Desalle. The Rockstar Energy Suzuki World rider then made it easy as he face planted the finish line jump at the beginning of lap 2 and Febvre was up to 2nd behind Cairoli on his new KTM 450SX-F. At this point it seemed as though Febvre might settle in for the long haul behind his more experienced rival, not this man though as within half a lap he was through and away into the distance leading a Grand Prix on a 450cc for the first time in his career.

Yes, he would go on to finish second after stalling the bike on lap 7 but he came away with third overall and the fastest race lap by nearly a full second. What is most interesting is that Febvre passed each of those three

riders in the same fast and jumpy section of the track, finding a line that gave him an edge in momentum on the run into the two jump section, and it was the first real demonstration of the impressive line selection and racing nous that would take him to 15 moto wins from 24 over the rest of the year.

WHO: Valentin Guillod – Standing Construct Yamaha Yamalube
WHAT: Coming out on top against Herlings
WHERE: Grand Prix of Great Britain, Matterley Basin

No one likes getting mugged in a race especially Valentin Guillod who, along with Max Anstie, was the recipient of a stunning Jeffrey Herlings sneak attack in the first moto in the closing laps of the Grand Prix of Great Britain that left him with no answer to the late pace of the Dutchman. It was a fired up Yamaha rider who showed up for race two and a more focused and aware version of Guillod would be hard to find from anywhere the 2015 season.

Soon after the gate dropped Herlings and his team mate Jonass once again became embroiled in a fight for first place and sensing his opportunity Guillod pounced and moved into the lead.
There was no Max Anstie in race two, the Monster Energy DRT Kawasaki rider was mired mid pack, and so Guillod was able to focus all his attention on the fast approaching Herlings. The results from that day will forever show that Guillod lead all 17 of the laps of that second moto and that Herlings stayed behind him to the flag, however statistics can often lie and in this case they are telling a huge porky.

As they crossed the finish line double to start lap 9 Herlings had closed up from 3 seconds to within 0.7 of Guillod and was beginning to pressure the number 92 machine on the fast and flowing Matterley Basin circuit. Half way round the lap he began to pile it on as he showed his front wheel to Guillod on the big step down before the Yamaha rider responded in the second half of the track by reestablishing a small gap between the two. From that point on it was as if there was an invisible bungy cord between the two that would stretch to just over a second, no more, and then contract to 3 tenths over the course of a lap. It was tense stuff to watch but must have been a different level of jangling nerves for the riders

involved. Guillod, desperate to add to his GP win from Spain and doubly motivated to beat a healthy Jeffrey Herlings in a head to head, Herlings himself out to prove that he was still as fast as ever and that this pesky Swiss rider wasn't about to show otherwise.

Herlings tried once more, putting in one concerted and forceful attempt to pass Guillod and exert his dominance, he did nose ahead briefly but was cut off at the next corner as Guillod wheel tapped on a wave and skipped back inside Herlings to resume his lead, much to the chagrin of the Dutch rider. It was an astonishing effort from the Swiss rider to strike back immediately and to hold his nerve to the flag and as the gap continued to hold steady at under a second with the laps ticking down there was no let up in his pace crossing the line to take the win and with it his second overall Grand Prix triumph in two races. Unlike in Spain where Herlings crashed out of contention, this time he did it against a fit and fired up KTM rider, a feat that not many MX2 racers have managed over the last 3 years.

WHO: Romain Febvre – Yamaha Factory Racing Yamalube
WHAT: Taking the win at home
WHERE: Grand Prix of France, Villars Sous Ecot

This is the second appearance for Romain Febvre on this list and it's only fair as he did win the MXGP World Championship. This race was a little different to his showing in Spain however, this was at the Grand Prix of France 2 rounds later where 30,000 fans lined the steep hillside, raving and hollering for their new MX poster boy to come up with the goods.

Febvre, as is his way, was barely flustered by the expectation of the home supporters, and though he acknowledged the added pressure he was in high spirits before the race when Lisa Leyland caught up with him for a chat.

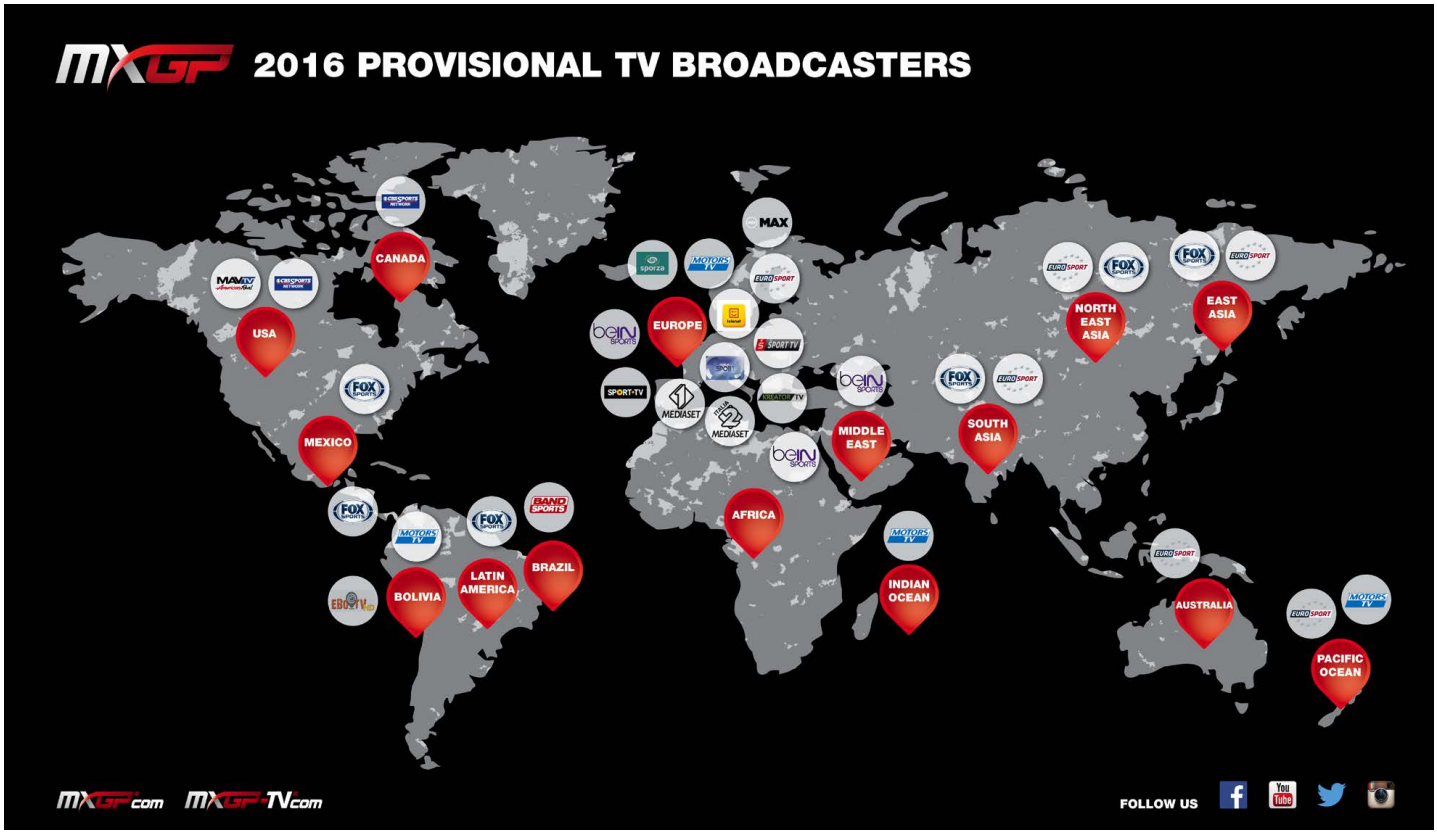
By Saturday afternoon the hillsides up and down the course were 5 deep as the fans waited with bated breath for the qualifying races to get underway. Romain Febvre did what they hoped

with a gate drop to flag victory to secure the first gate pick for Sunday's main event. Race one however wasn't quite such a walk in the park with Cairoli taking the holeshot and pulling away as Febvre fought his way past the fast starting Dean Ferris and fellow French rider Gautier Paulin on the tight and technical track. Once he was clear Febvre chased down the Italian but was too far back to make a move and had to settle for second place, the day wasn't quite going to the tricolore script so far.

Race two, as so often in this sport, was the crunch moment and a sluggish first turn for Cairoli quickly turned the advantage back to the local boy, who's own poor start still left him in 7th on the first lap as Max Nagl began to eek out a gap over the rest of the field. It was Febvre who once again put the hammer down on lap one to move up to second just after crossing the start straight for the 2nd time, sliding past Todd Waters to line up his sights on the rapidly disappearing rear fender of the number 12 machine. There followed an 11 lap battle of lap times as the two riders traded fastest sectors and laps a full second faster than Bobryshev in 3rd place. Tenth by tenth Romain Febvre began to close on Nagl and as the laps rolled by he zoned in on the Husqvarna machine, and the closer they got the louder the cheers of the fans became until on lap 13 the pass happened, and what a move. Up the long hillside wave section and around the outside of Nagl he went, cutting off the nose of his competitor in a massively confident move that tested the front end of his Yamaha to the limit on the slick French hard pack.

The roar that went up was the 2nd loudest of the weekend. So then what then was the loudest I here you cry, well that was when Febvre walked onto the Skybox podium to stand on the top step, for the first time in his career, at this home Grand Prix, ahead of Evgeny Bobryshev and Antonio Cairoli. That was a real spine tingling moment, something truly significant, not many MXGP rookies can say they won their home GP at the first attempt, Romain Febvre can.

We hope you've enjoyed reminiscing and watching some of the best racing moments of the 2015 season, it was a year of turbulence and tumultuous triumphs, an ultimately fantastic year in the history of the sport, and we know that you, like us, cannot wait for things to begin again in 2016.



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Great news for @TimGajser243 Slovenian #MX2 GP 2015 world #MX champion! In 2016 he is driving @mxgp for @TEAMHONDAGARI !!! SRE NO TIM!

@fantalord290
@mxgp @BT1zero1 @SuzukiWorldMXGP this is great news, can really get behind this guy.

Christmas is coming and while that is exciting, what is even more exciting for us MXGP lovers is the fact that the New Year is right around the corner and that means a new season of motocross is nearing. But, back to the Christmas countdown, we will put on a cool video for you to wake up to (at 08:00 CET) everyday leading up to Christmas. Enjoy!

Advent Race Calendar
Each day find the best 2015 MXGP race video on facebook.com/MXGP
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24

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n Everts. Enough said. As the most successful racer of all time in the FIM ross World Championship, his name alone speaks volumes. As a rider, Stefan ed everything you could possibly think of. He won a massive ten FIM Moto- World Championships with 101 overall grand prix victories, a number that unrivalled as even the rider trailing him in statistics has just 74, and that is other than eight time FIM Motocross World Champion Antonio Cairoli.

Since his retirement almost a decade ago after his last full season in 2006 FIM Motocross World Championship, where he signed off on his career as a professional racer with the MX1 World Championship gold plate, Stefan jumped ship from Yamaha, a brand he had been winning titles with for six years, to KTM.

At KTM he began the transition from athlete to manager and was able to learn and grow as he worked. Fortunately for Stefan he was a solid piece of KTM's success story, he had learnt from the best and he now knows exactly what it takes to win titles from both perspectives, as a rider and as a team manager.

Stefan's knowledge and influence within the industry is invaluable so when the news broke that he had left KTM and taken ownership of Suzuki, we all raised an eyebrow out of curiosity.

As it is a burning hot topic, MXGP Mag decided to contact Stefan Everts direct to understand how it all came about and what he hopes to achieve as the man pulling the strings for not just a team, but a brand.

Since you were racing, have you always thought about owning a team?
Yes. This has been on my mind since many years, actually when I still was racing for Honda. I actually started a team up with Dave Grant and that team was meant to be my next challenge and job but at the time it was too early, I was too young and too busy thinking about what would happen with my career and at one point things went wrong with Grant and I started racing for Rinaldi (Yamaha). Rinaldi showed me fantastic support and I had great 6 years with them with a lot of success and actually my plan was to continue after my career with Yamaha. This was something we spoke about a lot but at the last minute things changed and they didn't work out, so I went to KTM. It was a bit of a surprise for me and I wasn't really prepared but I was up for the new challenge and I knew that I wanted to continue being involved in motocross and racing and working with young riders, so something like this was always on my mind even if I didn't expect it to happen with KTM. It was a great opportunity with KTM and it was a really fun time, especially in the

first years there was a lot of things to do and everyone inside the team were extremely motivated so it was great. I am thankful for the opportunity they gave me.

Now you've left KTM to take the reigns at Suzuki. How did this come about, did you approach them or did they approach you?
The last years at KTM I kind of lost my position inside the team and I wasn't feeling like I was in the right place and I was feeling unhappy. I have been friends with Sylvain and his wife for many many years, we hadn't really spoken about it before but I wasn't really happy at KTM. So one night I was discussing things with Kelly, my wife, and we decided to send Sylvain a text message to meet up and talk about the future with Suzuki. He was straight away very excited and we talked about it a lot. Eventually I went to KTM and see if they had anything else for me at KTM and it was important for me to give them the last choice, but they didn't have anything to offer me, so I decided to go to Suzuki.

Sylvain Geboers the former owner of Suzuki, has practically made the brand what it is today, will he still be involved?
Yes, of course. Officially Sylvain will be the senior consultant for the team. It's important for him to still be here for the next three years, actually I hope it's more than 3 years. Sylvain has been the main guy for Suzuki since almost the beginning and I know it's going to take some time for us to fully get used to the new job. A lot of things have happened in the last few months and a lot of things are in the works and coming. It's going to take some time to get it all figured out and for me to take his advice especially on the technical side of the team, that is Sylvain's strongest point, and it is also important to have him there as we build the relationship with the people in Japan and everyone else around the world from Suzuki. It's going to take a bit of time, but Sylvain also gives me a lot of confidence. Not only Sylvain

though, actually all of the people on the team, the mechanics and stuff, these people are also very important in making the team successful.

Your father, former four times world champion Harry Everts, has also been a part of KTM with you, will he also switch to Suzuki?
Yes of course! He didn't have another option than to follow me and I told him, 'You have to listen to me now' but no seriously for me he is a very important person because he's been working with riders for such a long time, he is always next to the track and it is important for me that he is there when I can't be there because I can't always be there. I know how it important it is for the riders to be followed closely and to have someone there.

What do you hope to achieve in 2016?
The first goal for me is to get settled inside the team and form some kind of stability and to learn and understand as much as I can. I need to see the direction we need to go, I need to learn where we need to improve. There are a few things I want to change already in our plans for the overseas and the hospitality, but 2016 is all about learning and 2017 will be the big year for me. Actually my head is already a lot in 2017. As far as results for the riders, I just want a solid season with consistent results; this is something I think is very important for any rider or any champion. Consistency is the most important thing and I think this is the biggest challenge I have with both Kevin and with Ben, too. It is not expected that we will win 10 GP's although it would be nice to win a couple of them. I just hope we are on the podium, with some wins too and we will see where we are at the end of the season. We need to remember it's a long season, a lot of GP's, a lot of travelling with the overseas, it's not easy, it's tough on the crew, it's tough on the riders, we need to plan well and have a good schedule.

Kevin Strijbos has been working closely with fellow Belgian star Joel Smets but now it's your turn. Have you made any changes to his training schedule of pre-season approach?
We have changed his trainer and we have also spoken about what I think needs to

change on his program. Kevin is 30 years old now, he is not the youngest and I think he needs to refuel the fire so I am going to put him on some circuit training and interval training and make him a little bit more aggressive, to attack harder. I also want to improve his confidence and make him mentally stronger. We've seen Kevin be a little bit like a yo-yo and I want to make him stronger in his mind so he is more consistent and can show us what he can do. This is something I really want to achieve with him. I will also focus a little bit on his riding, to show him he can have fun riding in the week and still do well in the weekends.

And then the surprise selection, Ben Townley, what drove you to select him and what will be your approach?
Ben put in an awesome performance at the Motocross of Nations and this shows us something but obviously not everything, it will be harder to do that for a whole season. With him it is important to have him thinking in a different way. We have had a lot of conversations about the way he has been working in the past and there are a lot of things I think he can do differently, I have said this to him and he was open to listen and to try new things. During the season he had already approached me and asked me if I could help him make a come back, I was a bit surprised and a little bit honored. I have been friends with Ben for long time even since we used to race together and he impressed me a lot coming over from New Zealand as a little kid and then training a lot and learning a lot and eventually becoming world champion. I was very impressed by that and then as you know the rest of his story was not that good and he struggled a lot. I know he really wants to make this come back and it is really important for him to try and make something out of his career. I think he is still at a good age to make a come back but I think the main thing with him is to teach him to control his mind. He is a winner in his head, but he just needs to control it, to be more tactical in the way he races. He showed this

already in Ernée where in the final race he could have gone balls out and chased Romain Febvre and crashed his brains out but he didn't, he rode smart and there he showed me that he was listening and that he was willing to work together.

A lot of people wonder if you still ride yourself or if you ride with the riders?
I ride a little bit, I have done some testing with the bike and rode all day for the photoshoot with Gary Freeman, but the weather is really bad at the moment and I am more of a sunshine rider these days. We did an Enduro trip in November, myself, Kevin, Jeremy and Bas and it was really fun. We did 15hours, it was like a team building exercise for the start of the new season and now slowly we will start working. As for Ben, he is over in New Zealand preparing and he will come over in the middle of January, he's scheduled to race Hawkestone and Valence.

Speaking of the MX2 guys, you had an extremely successful year with Pauls Jonass, will you still be training Pauls and will you be working with Jeremy Seewer and Brian Hsu as well?
Unfortunately, I won't be working with Pauls, he is on the other side now, with a different team, so we will just keep contact with whatsapp. He is a great kid, he had an amazing season and it was amazing to see how much he improved in such a small space of time. But obviously we can't work together. With Brian Hsu, it is hard because he is still at school but Jeremy now lives in Belgium so I will do a lot of work with him.

It's clean from how he speaks about his new project that this is something that has been a long time coming and is also a long term project to secure both his and Suzuki's future in MXGP. With Clement Desalle, the nearly man and most successful Suzuki of the last 5 years, jumping ship to Monster Energy Kawasaki, the whole team will need to refocus its efforts for the new goals that Everts has in mind, and no matter how much he might play down his own expectations we all know that when he does something he does it to win.

Photos: Suzuki

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2016 Supermotocross Riders Cup

Motocross has evolved a great deal since its creation more than 90 years ago; we have witnessed the creation of National and World Championships, changes in engine capacity, progression in track designs, maintenance and safety, manufacturers and industries have made huge developments in technology and therefore today the motorcycles' performance are exceptional. Now we are about to witness yet another important evolution: the Supermotocross Riders' Cup.

Once the 2016 MXGP season comes to an end and the Motocross of Nations in Maggiora is finished, on the evening of Saturday the 8th of October 2016 the first ever Supermotocross race will be held in the famous Veltins Arena in Germany, home to the German football team, Schalke 04.

The concept is to bring Motocross to the town, meaning comfort for families coming to see an impressive show of Motocross racing; they will be able to park their car right outside the stadium, follow the whole race from their seat with many possibilities of catering and services, and visit the paddock without getting cold or wet. The Veltins Arena is an ideal venue for Motocross racing because it allows for a circuit of 850m in length, the roof can be opened or closed depending on weather conditions and its location is optimal being near to the Belgium and Dutch borders, only 30 minutes from the Dortmund airport and a little over 2 hours from Frankfurt for people coming from further away.

To save the football field's delicate blades of grass the entire pitch will be slid out of the Veltins Arena and 25,000 cubic meters of dirt will be trucked in onto the hard surface that is revealed to create a fluid race track where riders' safety is the priority while permitting the competitors to battle, pass and put on a breathtaking show for the audience. With riders' safety kept in first place and with the fact this is a Motocross race there will be no whoops, instead waves that we repeatedly see on MXGP circuits will be used and double/triple jumps will be replaced with spectacular table-top jumps. Sensational racing between the hottest MX riders on the planet will get fans cheering to their feet and during the intermissions the audience will be kept spellbound by specialized riders putting on a performance of outlandish freestyle jumps, young talents racing in support classes, dancers, music and futuristic lighting.

Each of the 7 Motocross manufacturers, KTM, Husqvarna, Yamaha, Honda, Suzuki, Kawasaki and TM, will put forward their 3 strongest riders, so expect to see many famous faces from all over the globe. For each brand a maximum of 2 riders will be on a 450cc/350cc bike and a minimum of 1 rider on a 250cc bike, each manufacturer has

United Kingdom
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Rostock
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Liverpool
Hamburg
Szczecin
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Amsterdam
Hanover
Berlin
Poznań
Potsdam
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London
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VELTINS ARENA
VELTINS ARENA
VELTINS
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the possibility to bring a reserve rider. An abundant sum of prize money will be up from grabs for the top three riders and the best placed 250cc rider, the top three manufacturers will also be awarded prize money. All 21 riders will line up on the starting grid and battle it out over 3 separate races, and each team will drop their worst result. The format can be compared to the Motocross of Nations in that for the MXoN the riders compete for their country, whereas for the Supermotocross Riders' Cup the riders compete for their manufacturer.

Teams will come with their racing rigs, so during intervals fans can venture down to the paddock where there will be loads of activities, get a feeling of the atmosphere there and see up close the brave men and their awesome machines.

Just imagine 21 of the world's fastest factory riders lining up on the same starting grid: Febvre, Van Horebeek, Cairoli, Herlings, Coldenhoff, Guillod, Nagl, Paulin, Gajser, Bobryshev, Charlier, Desalle, Tixier, Anstie, Ferrandis, Townley, Strijbos, Seewer, and other top riders from across the Atlantic. The manufacturers have so many excellent riders to choose from and they are bound to select the strongest team possible to compete for the top step of the podium. It's not Motocross and it's not Supercross, it's Supermotocross; taking all the very best from both specialities creating a unique event with a concentration of pure adrenaline and show with the greatest rivals of all time. The great news is that you don't have to dream for much longer because this will be coming to you next year on Saturday the 8th of October, when the Veltins Arena will be pumping with 54,000 excited MX fans ready to be a part of one of the biggest evolutions ever made in Motocross.

Live and delayed TV coverage will be the same as what Youthstream distributes for the MXGP World Championship, so if you are not able to get out to Germany for this epic event, fear not as you will find it on one of the many broadcasting channels or www.MXGP-TV.com

Follow us on www.mxgp.com and via our various social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube) to get more information on the event and ticket sales.

We will all be there at the Veltins Arena in Gelsenkirchen to write together yet another exceptional page in the history of our remarkable sport.

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Photo by Luca Armellini

1
MINUTE

Thomas Covington
64

NEXT SIGNING
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10:15
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MXGP Academy i waves

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The off-season is not only the time to rest and recover from niggling injuries; it's also the time to prepare, to go back to the drawing board and develop a plan that will allow you or your rider to come back swinging next season. But where do you start? That is a tough question but don't stress, the MXGP Academy has you covered.

Every winter, for those of us in icy nothern Europe, the FIM in conjunction with Youthstream and the MXGP series run a winter training camp in the sun of Spain. The camp is situated in the area around Malaga and is close to five different motocross tracks, which range from hard-pack to sand where the riders will be taught a number of on-the-bike skills and techniques. The program has been designed, developed and tested by many of the champions that race the FIM Motocross World Championship and is open to riders of any age and any skill level.

Mental strength is essential at the top of any sport, not only motocross, therefore the camp instructors have the knowledge to assist the riders in controlling their mind throughout the week and more importantly on race day. As well as riding and mental

training, the riders will also be given a physical training program specific for motocross where they will learn what's best for them in terms of developing strength and improving their cardiovascular endurance, and they will also be informed of what they should be eating to maximize their results.

The two-time FIM Motocross World Champion John Van Den Berk and renowned fitness expert Jan Postema head the program. To join in with the MXGP Academy Winter Camp visit John's website: http://www.john-vandenberk.com/new/eng/home.html

By entering the academy you will also be recognised for the MXGP Master Class selection. The MXGP Masterclass is the most unique opportunity for any rising star. It allows the kids to ride at selected rounds of the FIM Motocross World Championship on the same circuit as the professionals. Not only that, but the kids are able to meet their heroes and familiarize themselves with the 'ins and outs' of the paddock. For example, they are placed in the media center on the stage where they are taught how they should speak when presenting themselves, what their posture says about them and how to have good manners. They are introduced to some of the biggest industry names and get to see inside the trucks that are the base of the paddock. All these things are not only inspiring; they are motivating for the kids and give them a fantastic insight for their potential future as athletes.

In 2016 there will be more MXGP Academy schools popping up over Europe. School's that run throughout the season where the kids will have instant and easy access to their certified trainers who will also speak their language. Right now, the trainers are working with the FIM on certifications and as soon as they are ready the official program will be released.

With that said, there is a lot to look forward to for the youth of motocross in 2016, stay tuned to www.mxgp.com and the next issue of MXGP Mag to find out more.

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www.kiska.com

Please make no attempt to imitate the illustrated riding scenes, always wear protective clothing and observe the applicable provisions of the road traffic regulations!
The illustrated vehicles may vary in selected details from the production models and some illustrations feature optional equipment available at additional cost.

Photos: R.Schedl, H. Mitterbauer

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65 SX

KTM

Photo: C. Lavery

Paul Friedrichs, the Champ from the East

In the rich history of our sport Germany has always been a major player as an organiser, with winning manufacturers and of course with many riders involved in the Grand Prix series. But as strange as it is, with so many famous riders through the years there are not so many German athletes that have managed to claim a world title; when Ken Roczen got his MX2 crown in 2011, he was only the second German to succeed, forty-five years after the first, Paul Friedrichs.

Born in the east of Germany on the 21st of March 1940 Paul Friedrichs became, as many of the best motorcycles athletes of his country did, a member of the police sport club Dynamo, where the sportsmen had good facilities and expert teachers and trained as professionals. During the height of the cold war it was impossible for a citizen of an Eastern European nation to become a top sportsman on their own with the state involvement meaning that being part of a team owned by the government was the only way to succeed internationally.

With an intensive training schedule and subsequently great physical condition, Paul Friedrichs made his first appearance in a motocross world championship when he turned 21, scoring his first points in the 250cc European series in 1961. Riding an East German MZ, Paul got again a few points in 1962, in what was the first edition of the 250cc World Championship. Tall and strong, the German athlete switched to the top 500cc class one year later as part of the CZ assault in the main series. At this time riders from Eastern communist countries could only ride bikes built behind the 'Iron Curtain', and the Czech manufacturer offered a good ride to Paul. It was more than a challenge for him, as four stroke machines had dominated the 500cc series since his first edition in 1957; FN, AJS, Lito, Husqvarna and BSA were the references of the class. However, CZ trusted in their two strokes – the brand had a successful experience in the 250cc class, winning the European Cup in 1958 – and developed a new 360 'twin pipe' that was much lighter than the 500cc four strokes. In his first attempt in the 500cc Paul scored some great results, including his first ever GP win during the 1965 East German Grand Prix. He also won both the Czech round and the final race in Luxembourg where he became Vice World Champion behind the legendary Jeff Smith on his 500cc BSA Gold Star who retained his world championship from the previous year with six GP wins.

In this period of motocross the rules were different to today, as due to financial and political reasons only a part of a riders' results (half plus one of the GP's) were retained for the final classification. That means that the main rivals didn't face each other at every round, and in 1965 for example Smith did eight GP's (the best seven results, six wins and one second place were retained) while Friedrichs did only six to finish runner up between Smith and team mate Rolf Tibblin, the 1962 and 1963 World Champion. In 1966 CZ and Friedrichs en-

tered more events and with three wins in a row during the opening rounds of the series the German proved that his CZ was powerful and reliable. Once more he didn't attended all the races, but with a total of seven wins, one second and one third position he easily beat Rolf Tibblin to offer a fantastic 1-2 championship result to CZ, the first World title for a two stroke engine. He also won in that season his home 250cc East German GP and Pauls was elected 'sportsman of the year' in his native East Germany, all od which meant he quickly became the man to beat.

Even if he struggled sometimes to travel outside the East German Border (the governing body was afraid that their athletes might never come home after racing in the West), Paul had a successful career. In 1967 he repeated his triumph, winning seven rounds to once more beat Jeff Smith; the two rivals only faced each other in six rounds, but it was six wins for the CZ rider! The next season was more difficult for Paul who had another strong opponent with John Banks. The factory BSA rider only won two of the thirteen rounds of the series, but Paul could only race six Grand Prix due to political troubles between the then USSR and some of the other Eastern Block countries. Paul claimed his third consecutive title by just one point over Banks, and became the first rider to get three titles in a row, an achievement that only Roger De Coster managed to repeat in the 500cc class.

It was to be the last title for Paul, who during his career had also claimed many national titles. The political situation and the breakthrough of new manufacturers including the Japanese factories turned his situation against him and even though he won one or two GP's per year Paul was never again a title contender. He ended his International career with a second position behind Roger De Coster in the 1972 world championship, and then spent his time hunting, working as representative for MZ and later as a car dealer. He remains the most successfull German Grand Prix rider in the history of our sport with 29 GP wins, Paul was still alive to see the next German champion when Ken Roczen lifted his MX2 champions trophy in 2011, but sadly died shortly afterwards at the age of 72.

Text: Pascal Haudiquert

11961: 20th in the 250cc European Championship (MZ)
1963: 17th in the 250cc World Championship (MZ)
1965: 2nd in the 500cc World Championship (CZ), winner of 3 GP
1965: 11th in the 250cc World Championship (CZ), winner of 1 GP
1966: 500cc World Champion (CZ), winner of 7 GP
1967: 500cc World Champion (CZ), winner of 8 GP
1967: 9th in the 250cc World Championship (CZ)
1968: 500cc World Champion (CZ), winner of 4 GP
1969: 3rd in the 500cc World Championship (CZ), winner of 1 GP
1970: 4th in the 500cc World Championship (CZ), winner of 1 GP
1971: 4th in the 500cc World Championship (CZ), winner of 2 GP
1972: 2nd in the 500cc World Championship (CZ), winner of 2GP

MXGP

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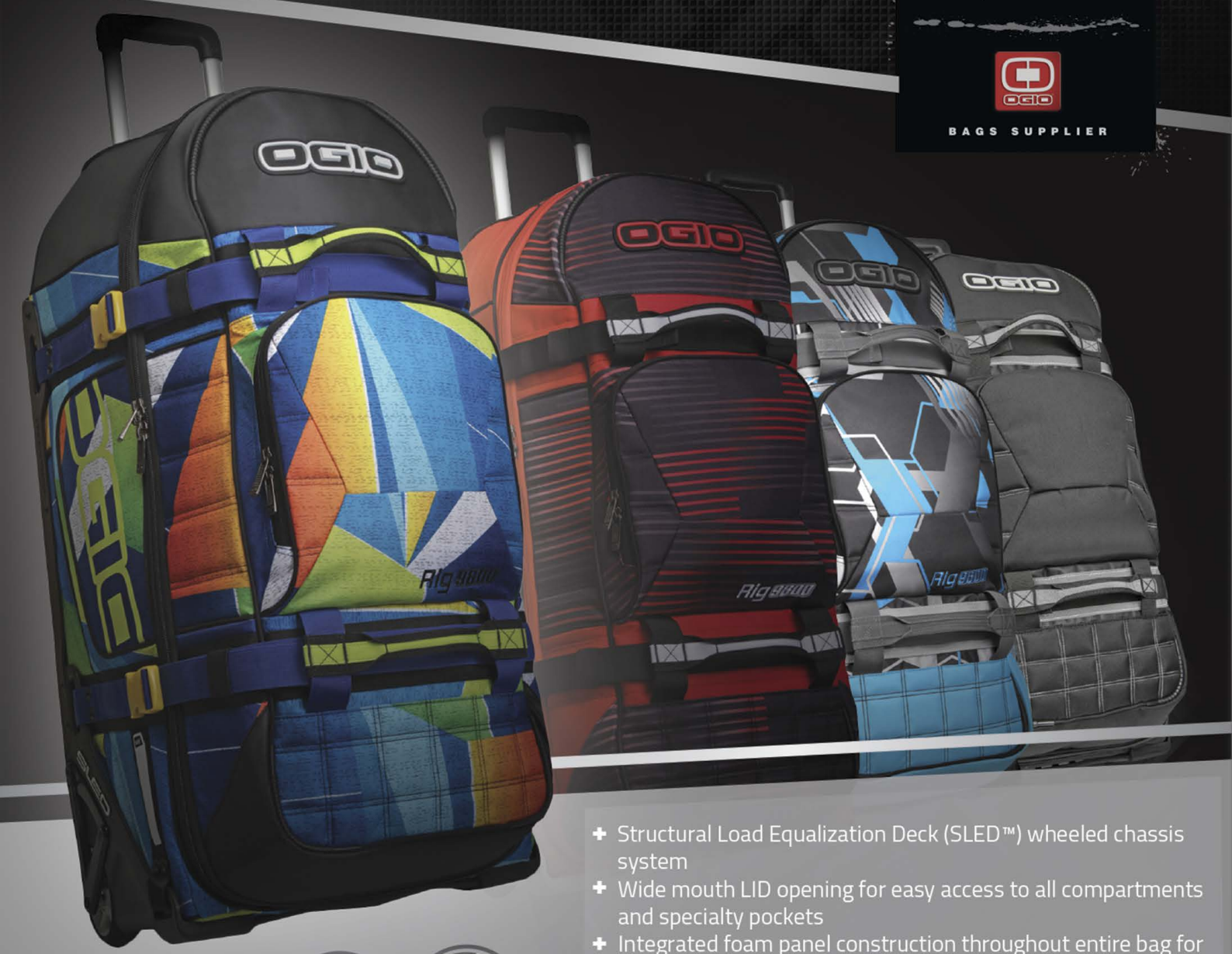

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Paddock Talks

01/ MXGP-TV's voice and former FIM Motocross vice World Champion Paul Malin had a blast testing Jeremy Van Horebeek's factory Yamaha.

02/Motocross runs through the veins of the Philippaerts family, left to right Denny, Franck & David.

03/Youthstream's annual organizers' meeting was another great success.

04/Another amazing FIM Gala has come and gone. All of the champions from all motorcycling disciplines dressed to the nines.

05/It's been an epic year for the Gajser family with Tim winning the FIM MX2 World Championship and has just been topped off with the marriage of his parents.

06/Jordi Tixier will be one of MXGP's hottest rookies in 2016, he will be teammate to Clement Desalle at Monster Energy Kawasaki Racing.

07/A new look for Husqvarna. Max Nagl & Thomas Covington have been out cutting laps.

01

02

03

08

04

05

06

11

Paddock Talks

08/Sneak peak at Glenn Coldenhoff's Red Bull KTM Factory Racing machine

09/A new team name and two new MX2 riders, Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing will home Max Anstie and Thomas Covington in 2016.

10/Tommy Searle has been out railing ruts on his Monster Energy DRT Kawasaki

11/Our wonder woman, the four times WMX World Champion Kiara Fontanesi celebrating her 2015 achievements with her fans at home.

12/Tony Cairoli wins the Masters' Show at Monza Rally.

QUESTIONS TO THE EDITOR

Hey guys,
When does the Christmas offer start to buy the 2016 MXGP-TV Season package will end?
Thanks,
Jack

Dear Jack,
The package is available now and you'll be able to buy the 2016 MXGP-TV season package with 25% discount until the 10th January.
Enjoy!
MXGP

Hi MXGP,
Is still possible to buy the 2015 MXoN package on MXGP-TV.com?
Thanks,
Mary

Hello Mary,
Thank you for the interest in the 2015 Monster Energy MXoN. The package is still on sale. Please follow the link below to buy it.
http://tickets.mxgp-tv.com/MXLIFE/en/2396-mxgp-tv/
All the best,
MXGP

Hi MXGP
I want to buy the MXGP-TV Season PACKAGE for 2016 but for job reason I'll not be available during the whole weekend to watch it Live.
Is it possible to watch the complete races ONdemand?
Thanks,
Carter

Hi Carter
Of course! All the MXGP and MXoN races will be LIVE and ONDemand on MXGP-TV.com and from this year Saturday's Qualifying Races, Saturday's EMX and WMX races and the new Rider's CUP are included in the package and available on Demand after the event.
Regards
MXGP

Hi MXGP
Will MotorsTV be showing all 19 rounds of the 2016 MXGP championship next year live?
Thanks,
Jamie

Hello Jamie,
Yes, MotorsTV will broadcast the whole season as they did in 2015.
Best Regards
MXGP

Dylan Ferrandis Photo by Tempestini

Antonio Cairoli Photo by Taglioni

MXGP

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